nalized with a loud sounding of the table and a solemnly sworn oath. 695
The vow resounds fiercely through the *ak-ui,* and then justice has been done.

Kirgiz scoff at the thought of grubbing at the soil, but they are 151
hardy, courageous men who mount patrol on the lofty Pamirs. They 223
have a keen sense of sight and can spot small objects from miles away. 224
Falconry is the great sport for those who are the wealthiest, and the 526
usual quarry is a type of hill partridge, the *chikor*. Sometimes the young women as well as the men become adept at this. Big game is limited, but at times the Kirgiz do hunt the now rapidly vanishing *ovis poli,* or long-horned mountain sheep, when it can be found. A sport they especially like is *baiga,* a contest like the *ulagh* of the Wei-wu-erh. In *baiga* some forty or fifty mounted sportsmen strive with each other to retrieve a dead carcass of a sheep or goat. One of the contestants dashes forward and hurls the carcass to the ground while the others wait. Then, in a thundering onrush of dust and shouts, the remainder of the players lunge toward the game. They resort to all manner of tactics to get to the recumbent prize—they beat an opponent's mount if it is in the way, they unhorse each other, and they ride their steeds like champions. Such confusion and bedlam; but it is rare, beautiful excitement.

A long coat stuffed with wool and cotton is worn by the Kirgiz over 291
trousers tucked into high boots, while a fur piece with ear coverings 581
(or an embroidered round cap) keeps his head warm. His woman is attired alike, but she wears a turban precariously high on her head. The gala Kirgiz occasion is a wedding, and divorce is not common. According to his religion a Moslem is permitted four wives, but a Kirgiz is usually not rich enough to afford more than one. Hilarity and celebration, not sadness, characterize the funeral ceremony of the Kirgiz. The basis for this, they point out, is that the dead are giving away to their heirs the wealth that has been amassed during a lifetime of labor; festivity, consequently, is in order. At the funeral the dead person is placed on a hill-top, interred with food, clothing, and a certain amount of money in a high, walled tomb. The sustenance is supposed to feed him on the way to the hereafter. This, like certain other rites of the 764

THE FAMILY

S N 121 59 563 I. Introduction

Northwest China is heavily populated by national minorities. In the province of Sinkiang, the Chinese even form a minority group and the Turkic Moslems constitute the majority. Therefore, in a discussion of the family in this area, general statements applying to the population as a whole would not apply, but a distinction has to be made between several different ethnic elements.

For the purposes of the present section, the following rough division suggests itself: (a) Turkic sedentary Moslems; (b) Turkic nomadic Moslems; (c) the Dungans or Chinese Moslems; (d) the Tibetans; (e) the Mongours; (f) the Mongols, and (g) the Chinese. The last two groups are discussed in detail in their respective handbooks, the IMAR Handbook and the General Handbook of China.

S N 779 59 183 581 Among all Moslems Islam forms the ideal concept of the family. In Islamic society the institution of the family has always been one of primary importance. The family is considered the basic essential of human civilization. Having a family, and being a dutiful member of one, is not only regarded as necessary, but is expressly a religious obligation. Marriage, the step leading to the establishment of a family, is a sacred contract into which each Moslem must enter. A Moslem who, without just reason, does not marry and does not establish a family, is considered almost as a heretic. S N [589]

S N 59 182 [554] [589] The family's function is primarily for reproduction of the group and the continuation of the family. The institution of the family, furthermore, provides security and peace of mind for its members. The family man is respected and esteemed in Moslem society; he is considered honorable and trustworthy. An unmarried man is likely to be looked upon with some suspicion and distrust.

S N 59 779 183 Since the family plays such a significant role in Moslem society, there is great emphasis on its unity and closeness. This is probably best expressed in the following quotation from the Koran, "...and Allah has made wives for you from yourselves and has given you sons and daughters from your wives." This closeness resulting from the blood relationship is extended to all other phases of family life.

S N 593 Love and compassion should underlie all the relationships within the family. In relations between a man and his wife, or wives, between one kin to another, love is stressed as the basis. S N [829] A man's behavior within his family reflects his attitude toward society as a whole. If there is love in his heart for his family, he will also have compassion for others and be of service to society.

S N 592 593 In the family, the man's position is always superior to that of the woman, regardless of his age. The wife is, accordingly, put in an inferior position to that of her husband, being under his control completely. The head of the house holds unquestioned authority

/The New Uighurs/

000 can marry easily, and divorce their wives even more easily. A
563 farmer seldom has more than one wife, but a city man usually
[595] has at least two, living in different parts of town. The marriage
[369] age for girls is twelve to fourteen; for boys, fifteen to sixteen.
[582] Matches are arranged by parents, and often the children have
[584] known and played with each other for years. Ceremonies are
563 performed at the girl's first marriage. Her parents invite all
585 their neighbors to a feast, at which the leaders of the mosque
are also present. Together the bride and bridegroom eat some
[152] bread dipped in salt water. Customarily the bride and her
mother weep and wail aloud during the ceremony. The mullahs
are paid a fee for performing the rites, and food and money are
given to beggars. All expenses are paid by the bride's family.
The only liability incurred by the bridegroom is the hagg-i-mihr,
a settlement for his wife. Theoretically the wife can claim this
settlement at any time before her death, but it is never claimed
except at divorce, and occasionally this old tradition is omitted.

A procession of musicians accompanies the bride, who rides a pony or donkey or walks in front of the others from the home of her parents to the home of her husband. When she arrives at her new home, she is lifted over the threshold by her husband and his relatives.

[556] Several days after the wedding, the bride's family, if wealthy, gives one party for the men of the two families, and one for the women.

b. Coming of age

563 Women do not reach their full social status until they are
562 thirty or older, when they attain the dignity of jawanlik. A
885 woman who has reached this age of discretion is called a jawan,
[302] and is privileged to braid her hair in two long plaits.

This coming of age is celebrated by a feast known as jawanlik toi, given by the husband. For the first time the woman appears with her braids, and wearing a special shirt known as the jawan-chi konglak. After this celebration she is more important in the home and commands more respect from others. She is also
[581] worth more on the marriage market, as the younger bride has a tendency to run back to her parents. A New Uighur man would rather obligate himself heavily to marry a good-looking jawan than to take a young girl. The word jawan can always be found
[533] in their love songs, as in the following example:
[539]

"Who is it who knows what health is worth?
Not the healthy man who has never been ill.
What woman is it that knows worth in a man?
Not the girl who has never been a jawan." (Skrine 1926:203)

c. Remarriage

563 Remarriage is not condemned in New Uighur society. The
587 average man is a lazy, good-natured, easy-going and rather